


ElderSource

Policy and Procedure

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Policy:

A crisis is a defined problem or event which is perceived as being beyond one's ability to resolve in any satisfactory way. It shall be the policy of the ADRC Helpline to practice quality crisis intervention when attempting to assist a crisis caller.

Procedure:

- I. When receiving a call through the ADRC Helpline, the Customer Service Specialist must attempt to determine whether or not a caller is experiencing a crisis. The Customer Service Specialist must do the following when attempting to decide what type of crisis the caller is experiencing:
 - a. Try to determine if there is a real or threatened loss
 - b. Attempt to determine the nature of the crisis (e.g. financial, medical. etc.)
 - c. Is there support from family, friends, or other sources readily available?
 - d. Determine if the person has well-developed coping skills
 - e. Focus on feelings
 - f. Tell the other person how they sound
 - g. Validate feelings
 - h. Avoid long silences
 - i. Be supportive
 - j. Keep it personal
 - k. Be warm
 - l. Clarify the meaning
 - m. Explore all options
 - n. Prioritize
 - o. Restore old coping mechanisms; help the caller find new ones
 - p. End on a positive note

- II. The following are the types of crisis that may be presented and how to handle each.
- a. Financial
 - i. Examples include, but are not limited to, inability to pay electric bill and receiving a cut-off notice, inability to pay rent or mortgage and facing eviction or foreclosure, unable to pay medical bills or afford treatment such as dentures, glasses, therapy, etc.
 - ii. Response – Customer Service Specialist should evaluate what other resources are available and make appropriate referrals (e.g. EHEAP, outside agencies, etc.). When no other resource is available, refer for Senior to Senior as appropriate – coordinating all available resources including possible referral for financial counseling.
 - b. Abuse/Neglect/Exploitation
 - i. Examples include, but are not limited to, caller suffering from physical/emotional abuse, suffering from neglect (from a spouse, family member, caregiver, etc.) and/or suffering from exploitation.
 - ii. Response – Customer Service Specialist should refer via 3-way calling to the Abuse Hotline. The Customer Service Specialist should also evaluate what other resources are available and coordinating all available resources to assist the caller with the crisis situation.
 - c. Suicide
 - i. Customer Service Specialists should attempt to see if the caller has taken the first steps toward hurting themselves or others in the home, if they have a specific plan, and if they have the means to carry out the plan, using the lethality assessment.
 - ii. Response – If the answer to any part of the questions asked is yes, the Customer Service Specialist should get as many details as possible, i.e., the caller's name, location and the number they are calling from, and Ask the caller's permission to send police and/or emergency medical services personnel directly to them, and depending on the situation, you can place the caller on hold while you dial 911, or have a coworker complete the call to emergency services for you, which would allow you to remain on the line with the caller. If the caller does not give permission to contact 911, you must judge whether or not the situation warrants such action. Always err on the side of potentially saving someone from serious harm, even if that means not protecting their confidentiality. If possible, Customer Service Specialists should try to defuse the situation until help arrives attempting to keep the caller as calm as possible. If the caller seems safe for the moment, Customer Service Specialist should help link them to an appropriate referral and connect them via 3-way calling to 211 First Call for Help, United Way. The caller's information should be referred to the Abuse Registry for investigation if appropriate. The Customer

Service Specialist Supervisor should be made aware and involved in any emergency process.